Oil Spill in Goa Coast

*619. SHRI V NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 8 square km. oil slick caused by an offshore collusion was theatening the Coast of North Karnataka triggering panic among the fishermen and resort owners on the beaches in Goa; and

(b) the steps Government are taking to overcome the pollution in the sea due to the oil spill in Goa Coast?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (b) On 23rd March, 2005 at 0100 hrs, an Indian barge MA/ Prapti is reported to have collided with Singapore Cargo Vessel MA/ Maritime Wisdom resulting in damage to the fuel tank of cargo vessel. This resulted in leakage of approximately 60 tonnes of fuel oil from the cargo vessel.

- As per the information furnished by Goa Pollution Control Board, the oil slick initially was of the size of 2 nautical miles by 100 meters.

- According to Coast Guard (CG) Headquarters, the leakage was stopped at 0400 hrs by transferring fuel from damaged tank to the adjoining tanks. The oil slick moved in a sourtherly direction due to prevailing weather conditions in the area and kept around 9 to 12 miles away from the coastline.

- The Indian Coast Guard, being the national agency for oil spill response, responded immediately by launching surface air response operation in the area and prevented ecological damage and dissuaded panic amongst the fisherman and resort owners of Goa and North Karnataka. For this, they deployed ships ex Mumbai and Goa for assessment and containment operations. The CG Dornier aircraft and helicopters were utilized for monitoring of the situation and aerial spraying of oil spill dispersant (OSD). The ship borne spill systems were also utilized for spraying of OSD to neutralize the spilled oil. The operation was terminated on 29th March, 2005.

- The oil slick is reported to have been contained and cleaned up.